



# Assess Your Risk Of Dental Disease



If you answer YES to ANY of the following questions, you or your child may be at an increased risk for dental disease. Please take this form to your dentist and discuss how you can work together to reduce your risk.

**1. I have diabetes.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

A higher incidence of periodontal gum disease is seen in patients with diabetes. You may require two or more cleaning visits each year in order to maintain your periodontal health. Brushing twice daily and flossing once daily are also very important in reducing your risk of further gum disease.

**2. I take prescription or over-the-counter medications**

☐ YES ☐ NO

Some medications may cause dry mouth, which can increase your risk for cavities. If you are experiencing dry mouth, please ask your pharmacist if this could be caused by your medication. Your dentist may recommend saliva substitutes and/or additional therapies to help decrease your cavity risk.

**3. I have had a cavity in the last three years.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

Past dental disease may be an indicator of risk for future dental disease. You should discuss a preventative regimen with your dentist or hygienist who may include one or more of the following: twice daily brushing with fluoride toothpaste, fluoride treatments, home fluoride rinses, and dental sealants for unfilled molars with deep pits and grooves. In addition, he/she may recommend reducing your consumption of foods that contain sugar.

**4. I frequently eat or drink sugary substances.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

Frequent consumption of foods that contain sugar is a major risk factor for tooth decay. The longer and more frequently these foods stay in your mouth, the greater the risk of decay. For example, slowly dissolving sugars such as hard candies, cough drops, breath mints, and antacid tablets pose a greater risk for decay. Of course, the more sugar you consume between meals, the more your risk increases.

**5. I put my baby to bed with a bottle containing milk or juice.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

Putting your child to bed with a bottle containing formula milk, milk, or juice can put the child at risk for Baby bottle Tooth Decay. Bacteria in the mouth convert the sugar to acid, which attacks tooth surfaces and causes decay. Baby Bottle Tooth Decay is characterized by multiple cavities on a child's front teeth. Discuss prevention of Baby bottle tooth Decay with your pediatrician and/or dentist.

**6. I have had or will have head and neck radiation treatment.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

Head and neck radiation treatment reduces blood flow and can cause extremely dry mouth, which puts one at high risk for cavities. In addition, if one's immune system is compromised, they may experience more frequent cold sores or other infections of the mouth. If you are having radiation treatment of the head and neck, you should discuss a treatment plan with your dentist and oncologist, which may include a saliva substitute, removal of compromised teeth, or other preventive therapies.

**7. I smoke cigarettes, a pipe, or a cigar, or I chew tobacco.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

Tobacco and alcohol are the leading risk factors for oral cancer. Together, they are associated with 75% of all oral cancers. Your dentist should perform an examination for oral cancer at your regular check-up. In addition, smoking is an independent risk factor for periodontal (gum) disease. If you do smoke, you should discuss quitting with your dentist and physician.

**8. I have had periodontal (gum) surgery which has left me with receded gums.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

Gum surgery can expose the roots of the teeth, leaving one at increased risk for root cavities. Talk to your dentist about the benefits of fluoride treatments following periodontal surgery.

**9. I live in a community that does not have fluoride in the water supply**

☐ YES ☐ NO

Fluoride in the water supply helps to reduce cavities. If you do not live in a fluoridated community, you should speak with your dentist about the use of fluoride rinses or other supplements.

*Please note: Not all recommended services are covered by dental insurance plans.*

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